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ABSTRACT

Noting that television is a medium ripe for exploitation by teachers because children are already motivated to watch, this handbook presents over 20 activities and teaching techniques centering around teaching students at all levels to write for television. An introduction presents background information on benefits of using television writing in classrooms, such as helping students distinguish television fiction from fact and developing critical thinking and listening skills. The first four activity and teaching suggestion chapters are aimed at kindergarten and elementary students and the remaining chapters are designed for secondary students. Chapters are as follows: (1) TV's contribution to poor writing skills, (2) storyboards (teaching information), (3) storyboards (activities), (4) television sets, (5) the television script, (6) fragment of a sample script, (7) student written script examples, (8) television commercials, (9) NAB (National Association of Broadcasters) code, (10) television commercial writing, (11) additional writing assignments, (12) television news analysis, (13) television news writing style, (14) news writing pointers, (15) television news writing, (16) news documentary, "60 Minutes"; (17) television documentary writing, (18) Charles Kuralt script sample, (19) television play writing, (20) survey, and (21) writing topic ideas to promote critical thinking. The activities are followed by extensive listings of ERIC materials and additional sources on television, a discussion of television career education, and a summary. Notes and bibliography are also included. (SKC)

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TECHNIQUES FROM TELEVISION TO STIMULATE CLASSROOM WRITING

Linden Fisher Raper

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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BACKGROUND

I began taking broadcasting classes at Ohio University (Athens, Ohio) and working at night as a salaried audio technician at the university's educational television station. When I graduated from Ohio University, my first job was that of a commercial copy writer at W E O L, AM-FM (Elyria, Ohio). I then accepted a two year contract to work at K A V A in American Samoa. My duties were primarily technical at this six-channel ETV station. When I returned to the continental United States, I accepted a position at New Mexico State University (Las Cruces, New Mexico). This position was a combination of instructor of broadcasting classes and manager of the campus AM-FM radio stations. Later I produced a series for the Las Cruces Public Schools called Music of the Cultures of New Mexico. I then shifted from broadcasting to education.

After I had been a classroom English teacher for three years, I felt that I had something to share with other classroom teachers from my previous training and experience in broadcasting. I wrote my first edition of Techniques from Television To Stimulate Classroom Writing with a special grant from the Rural New Mexico Teachers' Center at Zuni, New Mexico in 1981. With new demands in New Mexico for a course of Communication Skills as an additional English class, I felt it was time to update and expand this handbook.

Special thanks must be given to Dr. Art Dowell of the Education Department of Western New Mexico University (Silver City, New Mexico) for advice and editing the handbook.

INTRODUCTION

All statistics support what we know--that children, youth and adults are watching a great deal of television. "Today, more than 98 percent of all U. S. Homes have TV sets; about 77 percent have more than one receiver, and about 57 percent have more than two. Approximately 75,000,000 sets are color. According to A. C. Nielsen statistics, the average American watches slightly more than seven hours of TV a day. A study by the Roper Organization shows that 67 percent turn to television daily as their primary source of news and that nearly half rank TV as the most believable news source."[1] According to various surveys, the average child watches anywhere from 25½ to 54 hours of television a week.[2]

Since children watch a great deal of television, we teachers should exploit this medium. As teachers we can draw many techniques from television and apply those ideas in our teaching of writing. Children are already motivated to watch television. By the time a child reaches school age, that child has had many years of experience and conditioning to watch TV, and the techniques used in broadcasting--to which the child has been exposed--can be applied to the teaching of writing. This handbook is to help the classroom teacher to be able to use some of television's ideas.

The PBS station, W N E T, in New York has been working for many years to capitalize on children's viewing of commercial television. Debbie Wasserman Bilowit and her staff have been preparing materials and conducting training workshops to insure that critical television

viewing skills are taught to children. In one of Ms. Bilowit's articles, "Critical Television Viewing: A Public Television Station Reaches Out," she begins:

> How many times have we heard, "Children spend more time in front of a television set than [they] do in a classroom?" By now that statement has almost become a cliche. Yet, it remains significant. For, if children are spending that much time watching television, it is a force to be reckoned with--not by ignoring it or condemning it as many advocates insist, but by finding ways to harness that force, by helping children to turn those viewing hours into active, thinking hours.[3]

As one example from this article, Ms. Bilowit suggests that students look for the literary elements such as characters, setting, conflict, plot, theme, and logic in entertainment programs.[4] I like her expression of "to harness that force," and I wish to use that same force in a positive manner to stimulate classroom writing.

Working in reverse, I feel that the classroom teacher can help students with some serious problems associated with the amount of TV they watch. In her book, The Plug-In Drug, Marie Winn suggests that the problems of children watching too much television go very deep. Numerous studies imply that television programming has a harmful effect on young people. These studies have been done in various areas to show the influence of television programming upon children's consumerism habits,[5] crime rate,[6] and creativity.[7] More serious, however, than the harmful programming of television is the fact that television contributes to so much inactivity of mind and body. As Winn states:

> Whether the program being watched is "Sesame Street" or "Spiderman," "Nova" or "Fantasy Island," there is similarity of experience about all television watching. Certain specific physiological mechanisms of the eyes, ears, and brain respond to the stimuli emanating from the television screen regardless of the cognitive content of the programs. It is a one-way transaction that requires the taking in of particular sensory material in a particular way, no matter what the material might be. There is, indeed, no other experience in a child's life that permits quite so much intake while demanding so little outflow.[8]

I feel that if we introduce how television is produced to our students, perhaps some of the passiveness existing in television viewing could be corrected. If students learn how to write for television, we may hope that they will also learn to analyze what they view. We can also hope that students will recognize how much of TV is merely fiction and fantasy. This separation of the real from fantasy could be especially helpful in negating the influence of crime type television stories.

This handbook is designed to help the classroom teacher develop some background in television production and writing which can be transferred to the classroom. Material is presented for kindergarteners through high school students. There is an emphasis on high school writing activities for two reasons. My own personal background is stronger in the secondary area. Also, the New Mexico legislature has created the "fifth year of English" or a course called Communication Skills. Many of the assignments for the older students could easily

be incorporated into the new Communication Skills classes.

Although the handbook is designed primarily to stimulate classroom writing, other aspects of language arts are included. The handbook deals with some literary qualities of television, critical thinking skills, and listening and speaking activities. It is expected that a teacher might incorporate some of the handbook's suggestions within an existing curriculum; however, an entire curriculum in broadcasting could be developed with the material. It is intended that the handbook be flexible. Some of the "for the teacher" material should help the teacher with lecture notes or student handouts. Some of the "for the teacher" sections offer possibilities for class discussions and surveys.

Also, although such topics as the storyboard are meant for the younger student, the storyboard idea would serve as a good activity for the older student in special education classes. The visual sequence of plot would be helpful for special education students. Finally, there is also included a section on career education, a topic whose incorporation in all junior and senior high school subjects has been mandated by the New Mexico State Department of Education.

FOR THE TEACHER

TV'S CONTRIBUTION TO POOR WRITING SKILLS:

An outspoken critic of television has been Marie Winn, author of the book, The Plug-In Drug. The book first came out in 1977 and has been updated with a second edition in 1985. In one segment she discusses the decline in the writing abilities of high school and college students. Ms. Winn does substantiate her statements with survey results from such groups as The National Assessment of Educational Progress. However, in her book she tries to equate poor writing ability with TV viewing. Television viewing probably makes its own contribution to the problem; however, after citing a number of newspaper and magazine articles about declining writing skills, Ms. Winn concedes: "The role television has played in the national decline of reading and writing skills has not been precisely assessed--perhaps it never can be."[9]

She advocates that there be less or even no television viewing. For example, she mentions one father in New Mexico who has insisted on no television in his home. Most teachers attempting to collect homework assignments would agree that TV very well may have contributed to the fact that homework is often not done or done incompletely. Nevertheless, as teachers we can only idealistically hope for more parental help in controlling TV viewing. In the 1977 edition of The Plug-In Drug, 95.5 percent of American homes had TV. The percentage had increased to 98 percent by the second edition. With only two percent of all American homes being without television, teachers are challenged to capitalize on TV.

KINDERGARTEN AND ELEMENTARY CHILDREN

This section of the handbook is designed for the kindergarten and elementary school teacher. It includes some background information for the teacher and two activities. The first activity is the storyboard idea from television, and the second activity is the construction of TV sets for elementary students to produce their own television programs. Upper elementary students could benefit from some of the techniques of script writing which are described on pages 16 through 21.

FOR THE TEACHER

STORYBOARDS:

Commercial television stations and advertising agencies preparing commercials for both local and network broadcasting often develop a product called the storyboard. The storyboard can serve two functions for the broadcast industry. A storyboard gives the client wishing to advertise on television a visual concept of what his advertisement will look like when televised. Also, the storyboard works as a layout format for the production crew who will actually develop the commercial.

Huntley Baldwin in his Creating Effective TV Commercials has explained the storyboard well. He says:

> A storyboard looks like an oversized comic strip. It is a diagram of the commercial that breaks down the action to be filmed into a series of drawings or photographs, each accompanied by a brief written description of the action and the appropriate copy and audio directions. It is the words and pictures of the idea.[10]

Another important detail that Baldwin describes is the very first picture of the storyboard. The need to capture the viewer's attention of a TV commercial at the beginning is the same need which transfers over to any good writing in the classroom. Baldwin explains:

> The opening shot is critical. During these first few seconds the viewer decides whether or not to continue watching. She decides if this is for or about her. It is at this point that she either gets with the story or falls out of step. The opening may scatter her thoughts or channel her toward the message. Lose her here and she will never catch up.

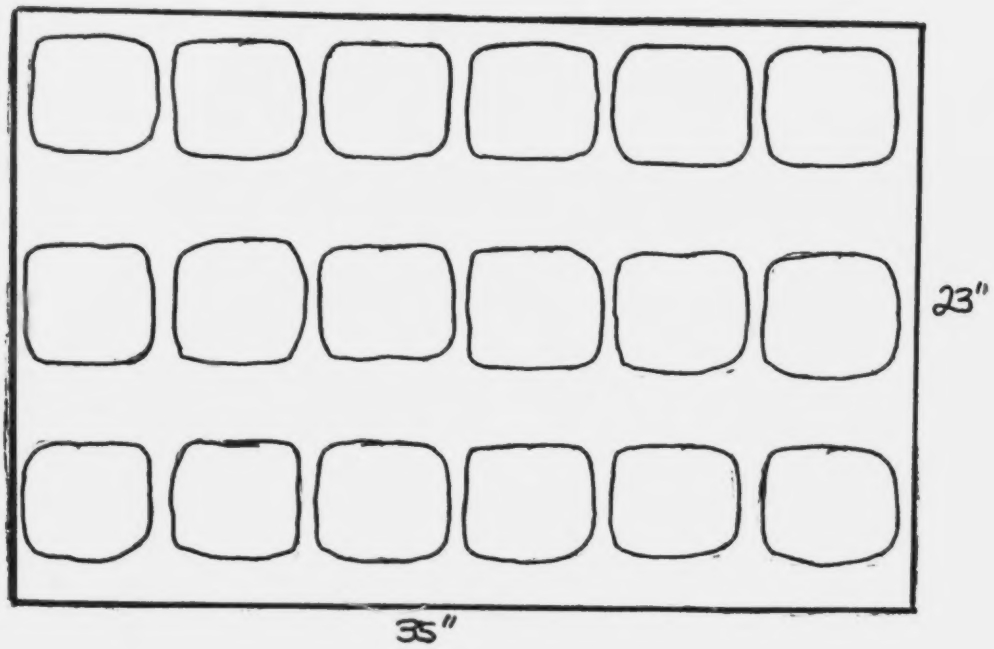
> In the interest of efficent story-boarding (getting by with as few drawings as possible) the first frame sometimes becomes a catchall for introducing several things at once--characters, setting, and props. The assumption is, apparently, that if the key ingredient is stuck in there somewhere, the viewer will notice it. But people will notice what they want to notice, not what the writer hopes they will. It is up to the writer, and later the filmmaker, to make sure viewers notice what they are supposed to notice.[11]

This importance of establishing information and interest in the beginning is germane to any student writing. Focusing a student's attention to the first frame of a storyboard presentation should point out the need for a strong introduction in writing. The visual approach often works better than a long explanation.

STORYBOARDS

ACTIVITY:

The storyboard idea comes from television and can be used very well in the classroom. A storyboard is a series of pictures which tell a story. Even the kindergarten child can make a storyboard by drawing original pictures to tell his or her story. With the storyboard the dialog is captioned below each picture. Each individual picture is of uniform size with each storyboard consisting of 18 pictures (see figure below).



Commercials are usually either 30 or 60 seconds long, and a great deal of attention must be given to every detail of those seconds. Storyboards provide a way to scrutinize that detail. In the classroom the teacher can provide that same experience of looking closely at

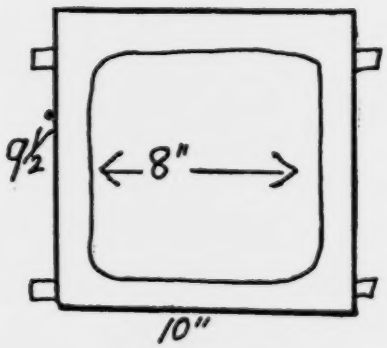
details in a written story by having the students create their own storyboards. The younger student begins to see the importance of sequence in a story. The teacher would help the very young students by adding the captions to the pictures of the storyboard. This activity is helpful in teaching both pre-writing and pre-reading skills.

TELEVISION SETS

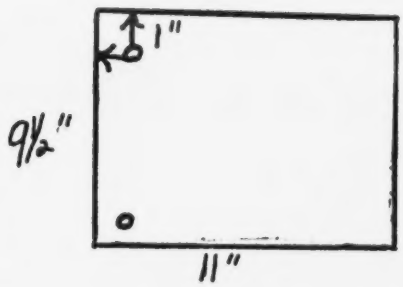
ACTIVITY:

Television "sets" for writing exercises for younger children can be made either very simply or in some detail. Cardboard TV sets have been created out of old boxes. If the teacher wants something to use for years to come, a television made by "cardboard carpentry" might be the answer. A heavy grade of commercial cardboard can be found in most teachers' centers, and the final product is durable in much the same way a plywood construction piece would be only the cardboard reduces the weight and expense.

The cardboard for this construction is about a half an inch thick. Those teachers' centers which carry the cardboard usually have the necessary tools to do the carpentry, too. Most of the construction of the TV sets can be done by using a standard jigsaw. The teacher needs to cut out two pieces which measure 10" x 10" to be the front and the back. The front piece needs to have an 8" x 8" screen area cut out of it (see figure below). A bottom section measuring 10" x 12" should be cut out next.



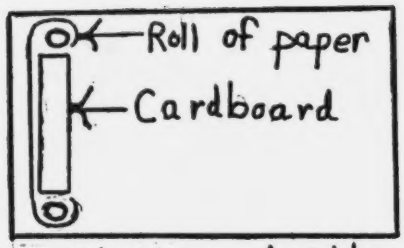
The side sections for the television sets should measure 9½" x 11", and there will be two of these required. Both side sections need two holes cut to hold the dowels in the final assembly (see figure below).



Once the pieces are cut, they are glued together with a basic white glue. When the glue has dried, the edges are covered with a brown mailing tape (the paper type). The raw edges of the screen needs to be covered, too. A coat of enamel paint is applied next. An extra piece of carboard (9" x 9½") needs to be cut out and tape should be added around all of its sides. This last piece should also be painted.

Three-quarter inch dowels or <u>very heavy</u> cardboard tubing are run through the holes at the sides of television. The dowels are tubes should be 12" long, and these dowels will carry a roll of paper past the screen for the students to write their stories on.

It is suggested that an extra piece of cardboard be placed behind the roll of paper to give the students a solid surface to write against. (See figure on the next page).



Side View – Inside

I also suggest that the television sets be built leaving a great deal of space behind the "screen" for two reasons. The first reason is that the space provides a place to store well received "television shows" to become "reruns." Also, the added exterior dimension makes the TV set more realistic.

SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS

This section of the handbook is designed for the junior and senior high school teacher. Most of the activities would be suitable in the middle school, too. It includes background information about the broadcasting industry, techniques to apply to writing, sample scripts, and activities.

THE TELEVISION SCRIPT

ACTIVITY:

The television script is written with two major considerations. First, the script writer must deal with how the VIDEO is to be presented; and, at the same time, the television script writer must give attention to the AUDIO. Both audio and video must be tied together carefully for the well coordinated presentation.

The television script sheet is usually divided in half. The left hand side of the sheet is devoted to video instructions. Since video instructions include all that is seen in the television program, the teacher needs to present several possibilities. Basically, video sources are studio cameras, film, slides, and video tape. Students will be able to write a good television script using these four sources for programming. Some students will know about computers which can be used to type up title cards which are then patched into (added to) the video programming. However, a teacher is always safe in suggesting that student scripts be written to include one or more of the following: studio cameras, slides, film, or video tape.

Most schools now either have or have access to the new camcorders. There are advantages and disadvantages to using these camcorders, and I will discuss the advantages first. The camcorder seems expensive as a unit, but when one considers that the better models include the camera, a microphone, and a tape recorder all in one unit the camcorder is quite inexpensive. Unless the setting is very dark, the camcorder does not require special lighting. Also, the camcorder is quite easy

to operate with a little practice. On most models of this type of camera there is one button to zoom in and another to zoom out on a particular subject. Camcorders feature automatic devices for focusing, adjusting the audio levels and adapting for various levels of light. The teacher can attach special coaxial cables between the camcorder and a television set making a complete unit. Students can view the television during a recording and using the television set as a "studio" monitor, or a recorded tape can be played back on the camcorder and viewed on the TV set.

When students are creating the television script which will be produced with the camcorder, there are several limitations which must be considered. Only one camera can be written up in the script. No slides, films or other projections can be incorporated into the script. However, a student could begin with a shot of a scene from a large picture on the wall and zoom out to a character in the script. The use of zooming in and out and panning will be discussed--whether the production is a one camera creation in the classroom or a two or more camera studio produced script.

If a two camera facility with a mixer (a board able to switch from one video source to another and feed the result into a video tape recorder) is available, then the student needs to learn how to write the television script which would be similar to an actual television script. Each camera shot called for in the script should be labeled as "CAM 1" or "CAM 2." Other abbreviations which students can learn and enjoy using in their script writing would be WA, MS, CU, and ECU. "WA" refers to a wide angle shot which is usually used to introduce a

scene. The wide angle shot gives the viewer a very broad, overall picture of what the story setting or commercial will be about. Wide angle shots are also advisable when a great deal of action is called for. If the camera operators are not very experienced, it is easy to miss important action if the cameraman is using a narrower shot. The result usually is then to jump to the action--causing an unprofessional blemish in the production.

The "MS" refers to a medium shot which might include one or two characters but not the entire scene behind these actors. The medium shot will not show reactions on the characters' faces in detail, but the medium shot will show more about the characters than the wide angle shot. "CU" means a close up shot. This shot, which is very effective when used correctly, is helpful in capturing a facial expression or reaction to something which has been said. On the other hand, if the actors are moving a great deal, much may be lost with the close up shot. Television commercials rely heavily upon both medium and close up shots. Television studios occasionally use the "ECU" or extreme close up. For example, the script might call for the close up shot of a small table. On that table is an open letter. A camera might go in even closer with an ECU so that the viewers could read the contents of that letter. Obviously, the letter in such a case should contain only a very short message.

In addition to various camera shots, television scripts are often helped along with the movement of the camera as well as the range of different shots. For example, a camera might "PAN RIGHT" or "PAN LEFT"

to create a certain effect. The panning device can be used whether the production is to be created with only one or many cameras. Panning is simply to move the camera across material on the set. The camera operator moves from right to left or vice versa. An example of where panning can be of benefit to a television script would be where a camera would be set with a medium shot. Then, by panning across an entire scene the setting would be established. The medium shot and panning combination would give the viewer more detail than an establishing wide angle shot. Also, the panning effect would be less static than the basic wide angle shot. However, some scenes do not lend themselves to panning. The student has an important decision to make about establishing the very important opening scene whether the production is a commercial, newscast, or television play.

When the one-camera production is being prepared, it is necessary to use the zoom capability of the camera a great deal to move from the various shots. Students, however, should be forewarned not to overuse the zoom. In the television script it must be noted in the video directions that the camera is to zoom in or zoom out (move in or out from one shot to another). In the two-camera production the zoom should be reserved for creating special effects.

Other effects can be created by the "DOLLY". To "DOLLY IN" would be to move the camera closer in on a scene, and to "DOLLY OUT" would be to move the camera away from the scene. These instructions also must be included in the video directions. Once again, this technique would be used to create a certain effect. The scene might call for a camera to be focused on one character , and one would DOLLY IN to create the

effect of moving closer to the character. To switch to another camera with a close up lense might be distracting and spoil the effect.

As classroom teachers we could introduce all of these techniques to the students. The script writing would seem like a very realistic project. Enough possibilities have been included to make the students' scripts be really quite flexible.

A final consideration for the teacher would be the examination of camera angles. All writing done by students will improve after they have had the experience of writing and seeing subjects from several perspectives. The teacher can have students do some exercises on examining subjects from different angles in preparation to planning camera angles in the television script. One exercise would be to have the students write a short description about something in the classroom as seen from two different angles. A second exercise would be to have the students go to the post office and write up a description of a criminal wanted by the FBI. The Federal Bureau of Investigation always presents these pictures showing the criminal from two angles--straight forward and a side view. In addition to writing a description of a criminal, the students can either write or discuss why the FBI uses the two angles. With this amount of attention given to considering camera angles on characters, the students will develop a very clear image of the exterior features of the characters in their television scripts. There is some transfer of this detailed consideration into students' other creative writing assignments which are unrelated to television writing.

If the school is equipped with a television studio facility, other possibilities include the use of film clips, which are especially important in newscasts. In the video column the script would state "FILM" with a brief identifying statement. In the audio column would be the dialog to read with the film if the film is silent or the abbreviation "SOF" meaning sound-on-film. Sound-on-film refers to any sound (e.g. music, dialog, etc.) which has been produced on the sound track of that film. Besides the use of film, there is a fairly extensive use of slides, too. In the case of slides, the dialog or music would have to be included on the right hand (audio side of the script). Video tape recordings are handled in the same manner as film, but the video instructions for video tape recordings are abbreviated "VTR". Usually, video tape recordings include the sound. In the audio column the abbreviation would be "SOT" or sound-on-tape.

Usually the audio column is devoted primarily to dialog of the characters or newsmen. Students should include any special directions for how the lines are to be delivered in the audio column. Examining some stage plays and their dialog would be good practice for students before trying to write a television script. For example, in addition to the directions as to the way the dialog is to be delivered, instructions for any off scene sound effects would also appear in the audio column.

If the students plan on using music with any of the described video, such directions should be included in the audio column. Often the expressions of "FADE IN" and "FADE OUT" are included to indicate if the music is to be brought in gradually louder or the reverse.

On the following pages are examples of television scripts. The first sample is a short fragment which students could examine before writing a dramatization. It is based on a two camera studio production.

The next two scripts were written by high school juniors. They had been assigned to produce something informative for television based upon what they were studying in American literature at the time. The authors being studied were James Fenimore Cooper, Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, and William Cullen Bryant. Most students wrote a script which involved an interview conducted of the "author" by a panel. One group of students produced a game show called "Tick, Tack, Poe" which revealed information about the life and writings of Edgar Allan Poe. One group did a gramatization of a Poe poem. This group of students learned a great deal about the problems of attempting night time production and the lighting of such a production.

A teacher might want to use samples of these scripts to help students understand scripting techniques. For exampe, copies of one of these scripts could be prepared as a student handout.

FRAGMENT OF A SAMPLE SCRIPT

VIDEO	AUDIO
Slide of New York City skyline	Fade in music
Slide of New York apartment building	
Slide of 5th floor window of that apartment building	
CAM 1 WA inside apartment living room	Fade out music
CAM 2 MS of mother and daughter	Mother: Your father and I have planned for years--ever since you were born that you'd go to college. How can you let us down and simply get married?
CAM 1 CU on daughter	Susie: College was great for you, but it means nothing to me.
CAM 2 CU on mother	Mother: For years we've saved for college. I even took that part-time job so that you wouldn't have to work while going to college.
CAM 1 MS on mother and daughter	Susie: Yes, I know, Mother. But still--
	Mother: College will give you so many chances to do a variety of jobs.
	Susie: That's just it--I don't even know what I want to do other than marry Jeff.
CAM 2 CU on mother	Mother: Why can't you plan to marry Jeff four years from now? You could have marriage and college both.
CAM 1 CU on daughter	Susie: First of all I don't want to wait four years to marry Jeff. Second, I have no idea what I would do with a college degree--I

VIDEO	AUDIO
	have so little interest in going to college, that I'd just flunk out.
CAM 2 MS on mother and daughter	Mother: If your marriage didn't work out--what would you do then?--Work at Sammy's Pizza Parlor all of your life?
	PHONE RINGS

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER INTERVIEW

VIDEO	AUDIO
Zoom in on Mr. Cooper	announcer: Tonight on our show we have a man that you surely all know, James Fenimore Cooper.
WA to show Cooper and three interviewers	interviewer #1: What are your favorite memories of your youth?
zoom in on Mr. Cooper	Cooper: I was very fortunate to be born into a wealthy family. My friends and I enjoyed playing on our large estate.
WA to show all	interviewer #2: What exactly led to your expulsion from Yale University?
	Cooper: I continually pulled pranks in class, and the officials were fed up with me.
	interviewer #3: What started you off in your writing career?
Zoom in on Mr. Cooper	Cooper: I pass on the credit to my wife who challenged me to write a better book than the one I was reading, which I was continually putting down. Although my first novel was a bad imitation, my writing soon excelled.
WA to show all	interviewer #1: What was your first successful novel?
	Cooper: My first successful novel, I would say, was The Spy. It soon became very popular here.
	interviewer #2: For which work were you most highly acclaimed?
Zoom in on Mr. Cooper	Cooper: I enjoyed all of the "Leather-Stocking Tales". I enjoyed writing about a character who was a part of me.

VIDEO	AUDIO
MS interviewer #3	interviewer #3: Tell us something about the character, Natty Bumppo.
WA of all	Cooper: He was an adventurous man, He did not believe in the different ways and troublesome laws of the settlements. He lived in the wilderness for almost his whole life, except for a few flashbacks to childhood impressions of religion. He couldn't read or write, and he didn't have any need for money or material goods. He survived on his strong will and believed in the wise use of nature's gifts.
Zoom on Cooper	
WA of all	interviewer #1: Did you enjoy writing about the sea?
	Cooper: Yes, after serving in the Navy for a few years, I wrote about my past experiences at sea.
	interviewer #2: Which of the sea stories reached the highest level of popularity?
Zoom on Cooper	Coooper: My most popular sea novel was probably The Pilot, in which the main character was Long Tom Coffin. Another popular sea novel would be The Red Rover.
WA of all	interviewer #3: Why did you leave the Navy?
Zoom on Cooper	Cooper: After my father died, I resigned my commission and was soon married. I then decided to settle down and lead the life of a gentleman farmer.
	Announcer: You have been watching an interview with novelist, James Fenimore Cooper.

TICK TACK POE SCRIPT

VIDEO	AUDIO
WA shot of announcer, two game players on the right and two on the left plus a tick tack toe board in the middle	Barbie Baret: Hello, Ladies and Gentlemen. Welcome to Tick Tack Poe where you take a chance to make some "doe." Now let's meet our contestants. To our left we have Terry and Marry McGrarey and to our right are Pam and Sam Bam. Now, let's start with the show! Terry and Marry?
MS of Terry and Marry	Terry: We'll take square number one.
Zoom to Barbie, the announcer	Barbie: When was Edgar Allan Poe born?
MS of Terry and Marry	Marry: Uh. . .January 19, 1809 in Boston!
WA of all	Barbie: Correct! You get an X!! Now for Pam and Sam.
MS of Pam and Sam	Sam: We'll take square number 5.
WA of all	Barbie: What is Poe best known for?
	Pam: His short stories!
	Barbie: You're right. Next, Terry and Marry.
MS of Terry and Marry	Marry: We'll take number 9.
Zoom to Barbie	Barbie: Name three of Edgar Allan Poe's best known works.
MS of Terry and Marry	Terry: "Fall of the House of Usher", "The Raven" and "Murders in the Rue Morgue".
WA of all	Barbie: Another X for Terry and Marry's side. Now for Pam and Sam.
MS of Sam and Pam	Pam: Number 4, please!

FOR THE TEACHER

TELEVISION COMMERCIALS:

The Idaho Falls School District decided in the late 1970's that the schools had some responsibility to teach their students some critical television viewing skills. N. Craig Ashton and his staff created a curriculum intended for third through sixth grades. However, many of the objectives for the Idaho Falls curriculum would adapt easily into activities for much older students.

Ashton states: "The overall goal of the commercial unit is to provide students with concepts and skills that will enable them to analyze the persuasive messages of commercials, to discriminate between product and affective appeals and to become sensitive to the subtle persuaders. The objectives are as follows:

1. The student will identify different types of commercial messages in terms of their purposes.
2. The student will be able to identify various persuasive selling techniques that are used in TV commercials.
3. The student will be able to identify appropriate means to evaluate the performance of the product and to determine the validity of the advertised promises.
4. The student will be able to identify the motivating purposes behind product purchases.
5. The student will explain the place of television commercials in our current mercantile system and in the competitive, free enterprise economy of the United States."12

Incorporating these objectives into a unit of teaching commercial copy writing would be very logical. In addition to learning about the persuasive message of the commercial, the students would approach their own commercial television writing with a clearer purpose of intent. By actually studying the media prepared commercials, students recognize the selling properties of those commercials. Carrying the process a

step further, students will write a commercial attempting to use those selling qualities in their own writing. The students should move full cycle. They observe and analyze commercials followed by writing their own commercials using the same techniques as the professionally prepared commercials. The cycle is complete when the students become more objective viewers.

ANALYZING TELEVISION COMMERCIALS:

There are various approaches to use in analyzing TV commercials--approaches considering both how they are produced and the impact of the different styles of production for student analysis. The authors of The Making of a Television Commercial present one list of points to consider in examing the television commercial production.

1. Slice of Life. Two people are in a little play discussing the advantages of a product--e.g. two housewives discussing dish soap.
2. Continuing Character. A character becomes associated with a product--e.g. Rose, a waitress and a paper towel product.
3. Presenter. The announcer directly presents the message or an actor or actress plays a character such as a housewife speaking to the viewer.
4. Music. A musical theme with special lyrics identifies the product.
5. Vignette. Several short scenes in sequence present the same message.
6. Testimonial. A person, either famous or ordinary, makes claims about the good qualities of the product.
7. Animation. Animated cartoons make especially good advertisements for children, but such ads are also appreciated by adults.
8. Tabletop. A commercial showing the product only and no people. This commercial is especially effective with food products.[13]

"GOOD" COMMERCIALS:

In The Radio and Television Commercial, Albert C. Book, Norman D. Cary and Stanley I. Tannenbaun give many suggestions and examples of writing commercials. This team of two journalism professors and an advertising agency writer point out some considerations to be taken into account. "On network TV alone, there were 248,000 commercial units in 1983. . .Numbers like these mean that one of the principal requirements of a "good" commercial is that it must stand out from the crowd."[14]

The authors have prepared a list of what should be included in the "good" commercial.

1. A good commercial does not yell at the viewer or in any way treat the viewer rudely.
2. In addition, a good commercial is honest. It should express the creative strategy in a highly believable manner.
3. A good commercial is positive. It should leave your potential customer with a favorable impression of the product.
4. A good commercial is persuasive. It should get people to buy the product and make them more likely to enjoy it when they use it.
5. A good commercial is simple. When audiences hear or see a commercial, they have one question in mind: "What's in it for me?"
6. A good commercial is specific. It should make one definite point and support it with concrete evidence. Use numbers if you can.
7. A good commercial talks person to person. It should not be addressed to broad demographic groups, such as working women or school children or retirees.
8. A good commercial makes a promise. Whether it is logical or emotional, however, the promise must be related to the product.
9. A good commercial builds a personality for the product.
10. A good commercial does the unexpected. If some of the other virtues of good advertising seem obvious to you, remember to combine them with surprise. [15]

Also, students need to know that in writing TV commercials, they must repeat information about the product and write in a clear, conversa-

tional tone.

FOR THE TEACHER

NAB CODE:

Students probably know that the Federal Communications Commission issues and renews licenses for TV stations to operate. Another organization, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), has a membership made up of radio and TV stations. It is a self-regulating agency. The member stations decide on the NAB Code, a set of rules for broadcasting commercials.

Some of the Code rules are included here for the teacher to use as lecture material, student handouts or as the basis for class discussion prior to the students' assigned writing of television commercials. The purpose of the NAB Code is to keep commercials from being offensive or in poor taste for a majority of the viewing public.

1. The NAB Code states that wine and beer may be shown and poured into a glass on TV; however, commercials will not show anyone actually drinking an alcoholic beverage on TV.
2. Insecticides are never shown to be used with either children or pets around.
3. One business is not supposed to make negative remarks in a TV commercial about another competitive business. This code ruling is being broken a great deal by a number of the fast food hamburger chains. A good class discussion topic might be whether this NAB Code ruling should be dropped or more strongly enforced.
4. Neither firearms nor ammunition which are sold through the mail are to be advertised in television commercials.

5. A commercial may say "acne" or "blemishes" but cannot say "pimples" or "blackheads."
6. Any kind of medicine for arthritis can not make any type of claim that the medicine restores any body function. The only thing a commercial can say is that the medicine will bring "temporary relief."
7. Private schools or technical-vocational institutions can not make exaggerated claims about the advantages or opportunities for anyone who enrolls in the school.
8. The testimonial commercial is supposed to be based upon an actual personal experience. Once again, an excellent class discussion topic would be whether any of the testimonial TV ads are based upon personal experience with a particular product.
9. Toys are supposed to be advertised realistically; and, the commercial should not say something about the price being JUST five dollars.
10. No commercials are supposed to show a person taking a pill on TV for the purpose of curing some ailment. Also, no person is to impersonate a doctor by wearing a white jacket, having a stethoscope, and also backing a medical product.[16]

There are many more rules issued by the NAB, but these regulations should give students some ideas about what is and what is not allowed in television commercials.

TELEVISION COMMERCIALS

ACTIVITY:

Older students should begin television script writing with the commercial. Certainly, all students are very aware of television commercials. Another reason to begin with the commercial is that it is the shortest; and, yet it is a complete form of presentation. Television commercials usually come in two lengths--either 30 seconds or 60 seconds. There are some occasions when television uses a 10 second or 20 second commercial. Duration is an absolute thing in television commercials, and students can learn from the discipline of making their commercial scripts fit precisely within the time segment. Television commercials are never, for example, about 12 seconds long.

All of the instructions concerning camera shots, film, slides, tape, dialog and music can be applied in writing the commercial. To move away from direct imitations of currently running commercial spots, the teacher should assign the commercial which is to be written about a fictitious product. For example, the students could write a commercial for Snappy, a new cereal; Brilliant, a new kitchen floor cleaner; Alexanders, a fast food chain restaurant; or, Planet IX, a new car. Since this television script writing assignment is probably the first such assignment the students will have done, the project is appropriate as being a group effort. The writing exercise is planned primarily to introduce the students to the terms and layout of the television script. After the students have written some commercials, a few should be presented in class to reinforce the reading, speaking, and listening aspects of language arts.

As a note of warning to the teacher, frequently students see this assignment as a time to be "silly.". Students need to be encouraged to make their commercial a convincing attempt to sell their product. The assignment should be intended to represent reality and not be a parody of some commercial seen on TV. The parody type of assignment would be too easy, of little learning value, and recognized by students as a variation of "free time."

Along with television commercials are public service announcements or PSA's. Public service announcements work approximately in the same manner as commercials except the PSA promotes a non-profit product or organization. the PSA works within the same time length reference and uses the same scripting techniques as the commercial. An example of a PSA which students enjoy writing about is a benefit dance being held by a non-profit organization.

A teacher needs to assign several commercials for practice before the students attempt more complicated scripting. The students should do at least one 30-second and one 60-second commercial. If additional practice is indicated, a PSA would make a good supplementary writing exercise.

TELEVISION COMMERCIALS

ADDITIONAL WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

Comparison and Contrast Essay Topics.

1. Compare and contrast the impact of the testimonial television commercial using a "man off the street" and a famous actor, actress or sports personality. What do testimonial commercials have in common? Discuss the impact of both types of testimonial commercials and give examples where appropriate to support the discussion.

2. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages for a television station's having several commercials during prime time viewing. For example, consider the audience as "captive." However, the audience may be irritated due to program interruptions.

3. Marya Mannes, a feminist spokesperson, [has] charged television with sustaining many cultural stereotypes about women's roles. She especially targeted television commercials which reinforce, like an insistent drill, the assumption that a woman's only valid function is that of wife, mother, and servant of men: the inevitable sequel to her earlier function as sex object and swinger. Manners went on to suggest that only four types of women appear in TV ads: the gorgeous teen-age swinger with bouncing locks; the young mother teaching her baby girl the right soap for skin care; the middle-aged housewife with the voice like a power saw; and the old lady with dentures and irregularity."[17]
   Write a comparison and contrast essay that demonstrates the stereotyping of women with a television commercial that does not.

Longer Essay Topics or Research Paper Ideas.

1. Explain the place of television commercials in our current mercantile system and in the competitive, free enterprise economy of the United States.

2. Identify different types of commercial messages in terms of their purposes.

FOR THE TEACHER

TELEVISION NEWS ANALYSIS:

As has been stated earlier, television news has become one of the primary sources for news for most Americans. The Idaho Falls School District addressed themselves to this fact when the district developed their project, "The Way We See It." The project has been one to promote critical viewing skills in students. In the area of news on television, N. Craig Ashton has said:

> The collection and dissemination of news by television has become one of the major sources of information for students. It is likely that students will depend more upon the television for news than any other alternative information source. This dependence leads to the justification for teaching skills to help analyze the structure and content of television news.
>
> The major curriculum emphasis is formulated into the following areas:
>
> 1. Students are taught to become aware of the limitations of television news (time constraints, selection of stories, editing, etc.)
> 2. Children are provided with an awareness of the capabilities of televised news programming (visual impact, concise summarized news items, collection of many stories in a short period of time, etc.)
> 3. Students practice skills in verifying television news through other information sources.
> 4. Parents and students are encouraged to communicate and share opinions about television news events.
>
> A culminating activity in this content area allows groups of students to collect, edit, produce, present and film television news as a reinforcement to the skills which have been previously learned.[18]

FOR THE TEACHER

TELEVISION NEWS WRITING STYLE:

English teachers regularly are faced with the problems of teaching organizational skills, topic sentences and transitional sentences to students for their essay writing. Some analysis of television newscasts and the media's terms should help students. There should be a transfer of some of television's newswriting techniques in fostering better essay writing.

For example, news men and women use different ways of organizing a newscast, but they always use some form of organization. Students can be assigned news viewing simply to jot down each story of a newscast. They should include a brief description about the story. They could then bring their notes to class for an analysis of the organization of the newscast.

K. Tim Wulfemeyer in his Broadcast Newswriting: A Workbook has discussed several approaches to organizing the newscast.

> The continuity and flow of a newscast can be improved greatly by using a definite organizational model. You might use a number of traditional newscast formats, or you might want to incorporate elements of a number of formats to develop your own. The important thing is to have a definite plan for organizing your newscast.
>
> Four of the most commonly used formats are Chronological, Significance, Subject, and Geographical.
>
> In the chronological format, stories are arranged in the order they occured with the most recent coming first followed by the second most recent, and so on.
>
> In the significance format, stories are arranged in the order of their importance and impact for the audience. The

> story that affects the audience the most is aired first, followed by the second most important and so on.
>
> In the subject format, stories are grouped together according to topic. For example, all police action stories would be linked together then all fire stories, all government stories, etc.
>
> In the geographical format, all local stories might run first, followed by state, regional, national, and international stories.
>
> Of course, elements of the various formats can be blended and you can have much overlapping. For example, you might want to use the significance format, but might modify it slightly by giving the most important local news first followed by the most important state news and so on.
>
> Do strive for SOME logical newscast organization, though. Our audience will appreciate it. [19]

The teacher can explain these different approaches to newscast organization. As the students become aware of the importance of organization in television news, they have to note the same importance of organization in their own writing. Of the four formats which have been described, the students will probably find that the significance format is the approach used most often in television news. In their own writing they need to analyze whether the most significant material should come at the beginning of their essay to catch the attention of the reader or whether the most significant material should be at the end of the essay to build up the reader's interest and sustain the reader until the end of the essay.

Teachers can borrow ideas from television news in teaching the topic sentence. Topic sentence instruction is very important to good

essay writing; however, many students fail to practice what we teachers preach. In television news the topic sentence is a "lead" (pronounced leed), and the good or bad lead means money. If the newsman does not include a good lead sentence to the first news story, the viewer will be either confused about what the story is about or uninterested to the point of changing channels. In Broadcast News Writing, Reporting, and Production, the authors have given some ideas for handling lead sentences. They have said: "The most important element in any news story, whether for print or broadcast, is the lead sentence. . .The lead sets the tone of the story. Without a good lead, the listener's mind will probably begin to wander."[20] These authors explain hard and soft leads, suspense leads, shotgun leads and the problems of negative leads.

Hard and Soft Leads

> The hard lead goes right to the heart of the story. The writer decides which piece of information in the story is most important and then deals with it in his first sentence. An example: Governor Smith says he will sign a death penalty bill if the state legislature passes it. The lawmakers are expected to do so next week.
>
> Using the same information, a broadcast newswriter might decide to use a soft lead, such as this: Supporters of a death penalty bill got some encouragement today from Governor Smith. The soft lead is less direct. The writer has alterted listeners that they will be hearing something about the death penalty bill but delays saying that the governor will sign the bill if it is approved. That information would come in the second sentence.

Suspense Leads

Sometimes a hard news story can be told effectively by delaying the most important details to the end. For example, an entire story might be told about a young boy's watching some suspicious characters. The story would develop showing that these characters are bank robbers, and the boy has alerted the police. The last sentence of the story might be a suspense lead of "John Farrell is the hero of the day."

> This lead is effective because it creates suspense. But be careful not to drag it out needlessly. Broadcast listeners are accustomed to getting their stories quickly and to the point. This kind of change of pace can be a pleasant break, especially if not overworked.

Shotgun Leads

> Leads that deal with two or more related stories are called shotgun leads. For example, if a series of tornadoes strikes Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota, a shotgun lead might be as follows: Tornadoes slammed into three midwestern states, killing ten people and causing millions of dollars in damage.
>
> The newswriter combined three related tornado stories into one lead sentence before going on to give details about what happened in each state.

Negative Leads

> Try to keep the word not out of your first sentence. It is better, for example, to say: The governor says he'll veto a mass transit bill.
>
> than to say:
>
> The governor says he will not sign a mass transit bill.
>
> Both say the same thing, but the positive lead is stronger and easier to understand.[21]

In addition to borrowing techniques from television news for writing organization and topic sentence writing, the teacher can also examine the newswriter's thinking for transitional sentences. Instead of using the word "transitional," newswriters refer to the "bridge."

> Bridge your stories, Use stories that help bring you from one category of the story to another. The bridge story has something in common with the story it follows and the story it precedes.[22]

Using the "bridge" terminology may be only a gimmick, but it might work when students accept so much from television.

FOR THE TEACHER

NEWS WRITING POINTERS:

Some pointers for writing for film and videotape are presented for the teacher to use either as lecture notes or as a student handout.

Writing Guidelines

1. Copy should flow in a natural, conversational, and interesting manner.
2. Words and pictures should not conflict.
3. You don't have to identify and describe everything that appears or occurs in the film or tape. Film and tape will tell their own story in many cases. Instead of simply "describing" what the audience is seeing, "explain" the significance of what is being seen.
4. Be sure to identify each newsworthy person, place, or thing the first time they appear on the screen.
5. If the film or tape has been previously edited, be sure to "underwrite" slightly. We want :03 - :05 of film or tape after the narration ends.[23]

TELEVISION NEWS

ACTIVITY:

Television news is a more complex type of script writing than commercials. One thing which makes the newscast more complex is the fact that it rarely depends upon just studio cameras and dialog. The newscast always incorporates other sources of audio and video such as film clips, slides and pre-taped interviews. A television newscast very well might include additional studio cameras for weather maps and the weather man or editorials. There could be a sports section, too.

Depending upon the class, the teacher might want to continue having the students work in small groups. Hopefully by the time the students get to writing their television plays, they will want to produce their own, very individualized scripts. However, with the newscast a group of students can work on one aspect of the program such as the weather while another group is preparing the local news.

A teacher can introduce an analysis of news factors here (see pages 38-9). Also, the teacher should point out that the first story of any newscast is the most important story. There are two reasons why all newscasts are produced with the most important story being read first and the least important being read last. The news staff of all television stations want to be certain that they attract the viewers to watch their newscast. The second reason for this order is that if the newscast runs out of time, unimportant news items will be the ones to be eliminated. A good exercise involves the reading of a local newspaper to decide which of several stories the students rank as the

"lead story" or the most important. Students should also be asked to watch the news for several evenings and report whether they agree or disagree with the order of the newscasts they have seen.

In addition to studying the news format, the students need to learn about the writing style of newscasts. The writing style for newscasts is somewhat different from the television play or commercial writing. Sentences in the newscast are often short to give the news a crisp and precise sound. The newscaster's main objective is to present a news delivery which makes him sound like an authority. The short sentence helps to give that effect.

K. Tim Wulfemeyer in his Broadcast Newswriting: A Workbook explains newswriting style in this manner:

> Writing news for broadcast is different from writing news for the print media. The audience doesn't have a written version of the broadcast news stories as they do with newspapers or magazines; therefore, broadcast newswriters must write in a way that ensures the audience will be able to understand complex issues and events on the first hearing and/or seeing.
>
> Broadcast news must be written in a simple, direct manner. It must be written so a newscaster can read the copy easily and communicate effectively to people who often are not giving the newscaster their full attention.
>
> The real key to effective broadcast newswriting is the ability to write the way people talk in their everyday conversations. Broadcast newswriters must strive to achieve an informal, conversational, flowing writing style. Ideally, newscasters should sound as if they're simply talking about issues and events with friends and not reading news copy to a faceless mass.[24]

Although Wulfemeyer's statements about news copy are correct, the

teacher needs to emphasize the importance of maintaining a tone that the newscaster is an authority on the material.

An exercise students enjoy is the "major story" which is "called in" by the teacher. The students have to prepare a story to be ready "to go on the air" in ten minutes. The teacher should warn the students that such a story is likely to "break" during the class period anytime that week. When the teacher announces the story, he/she gives the students very few details. The students may go to another teacher or the principal, who have been prepared ahead of time. The outside person may be used to verify some facts. The student newscasters may not rely upon slides or film. The entire verification of facts and writing of the newscast must be done within the ten minute period allowed before the newscast is presented.

FOR THE TEACHER

NEWS DOCUMENTARY, 60 MINUTES:

The news documentary series, 60 Minutes has not only been one of the highest rated news documentary programs but also a top-rated program in terms of all television programming. An interesting class discussion could be about the success of 60 Minutes. Included here are two opinions about the success which might help start the discussion.

Harry Reasoner, who helped create the program almost 20 years ago, has said: "We [Mike Wallace, Morley Safer, Dan Rather, and Harry Reasoner at the time of this statement] are reporters. We obviously couldn't do it if the five producers assigned to each correspondent did not also go everywhere, at considerably more length and with more involvement in each story. But each of the correspondents spends enough of himself on each story to qualify as a reporter, and I think people sense that."[25]

Av Westin believes that the success of 60 Minutes is due to the time and day of the week--Sunday night. Sunday is a day for reflection. "The viewer can sit back and admit, 'I haven't read a book all week. I haven't listened to the radio news. I did not keep up with the papers, but if I watch 60 Minutes, can I not say that I am informed?"[26]

Some critics of the series feel that there is bias in the editing. Other people point to the fraud schemes which the program has exposed and played a role in eradicating. Students could be asked to do any number of topics of opinion polling, research or discussion on this controversy. A point of interest might be about the structure of the

program in the early days. In 1968 60 Minutes only used two reporters, Mike Wallace and Harry Reasoner. Both men would report on the same story. Wallace would take the more liberal stand and Reasoner the more conservative position. According to Reasoner, "This led to a strange but I think acceptable journalistic tactic: we could become somewhat less objective, we were briefly advocates, knowing that the other side would have its advocate, too."[27]

TELEVISION DOCUMENTARIES

ACTIVITY:

Television documentaries present a wide variety of topics with the intent of informing. A popular documentary type of TV programming today is the 60 Minutes program series which is actually an hour long program made up of several short documentaries. The documentary is a good project for teachers to assign because of the documentary's purpose of informing. Students can produce their own individual documentary segment which can be added to the works of the other students to make a 60 Minutes type of program. The activity teaches many skills such as researching, organizing, writing, editing, re-writing, and presenting.

Popular topics with students include the dangers of smoking, the increase of crime and the laws about motorcycle helmets. There is some controversy connected with each topic. The documentary is centered around quoted statistics and interviews with "authorities".

Another type of television documentary is the historical documentary which usually includes some elements of television play writing (see Television Plays). Although a commentator may present some statistics about the point in history, many times the events are presented as a drama. Such a writing assignment can be coordinated with the history teacher.

Since television documentaries are always informative, a teacher can assign any of the usual research topics handled by a term paper to be written as a television documentary. I do not suggest that the term paper be replaced by the documentary script. However, the documentary

script does provide the student with many of the same learning experiences in researching and organizing that the term paper teaches.

Well produced documentaries can give the teacher some media material to use in future classes. Teachers in other areas such as math, science, civics, and vocational programs might be interested in cooperating to have the material of a special unit prepared on tape in documentary form. A documentary on the school's library could be a very informative program for new students. The topics for documentaries are flexible, and the preparation of a good documentary is an excellent teaching technique.

On the following pages is a script by Charles Kuralt. This script was prepared for his On the Road series. By having students examine the script, the teacher should be able to demonstrate how Kuralt used the theme of liberty to hold his script together. Also, students should note the care Kuralt has given to tie his audio together with his video. One prime example of his tying his audio and video together comes near the end of the script when Kuralt is standing by Jefferson's bed with a bust of Adams in the background. Kuralt is discussing the deaths of the two men.

CHARLES KURALT SCRIPT

VIDEO	AUDIO
O/C Cronkite	President Kennedy once hosted a dinner for fifty Nobel Prize winners and he said: "This is the most extraordinary collection of talent, of human knowledge, that has ever been gathered at the White House, with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone." It's that towering figure in American history who is profiled tonight by Charles Kuralt. On the Road to '76, in Virginia.
Take SOT Charles Kuralt Stand-up at tombstone Close-up of tombstone	This is what he directed to be written on his tombstone, this and, as he said, not a word more: "Here was buried Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and father of the University of
Close-up O/C Kuralt	Virginia"--nothing about his having been President of the United States. He thought of that as just an honor

VIDEO	AUDIO
	he had once, to be for a time an employee of the people. He wasn't interested in honors. He was interested in liberty.
Medium wide Kuralt walking through graveyard	Don't look for him down here in the mists of the family graveyard. Up on top of this hill, in the sunshine, he's still living. He was
Close-up of house Pull back Wide shot house	the architect of Monticello, but architecture was his pastime; liberty was his passion. Walk
Reflection of house in pool of water Pull back to wide shot of house	around here, where he lived and thought, and you can hear him on the subject of liberty. "The God who gave us life gave us liberty at
Close-up trees Pull back to wide shot from balcony	the same time." "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."
Close-up on flowers in window Zooms out	You almost expect to find him up here, cultivating his begonias. He could raise flowers. He could, a biographer wrote accurately,
Wide shot of house	calculate an eclipse, survey an

VIDEO	AUDIO
	estate, tie an artery, plan an edifice, try a cause, break a
Dining room	horse, dance a minuet, play a violin.
Willow tree	Never mind. He gave up all those pursuits to pursue liberty.
Pan to garden Medium shot	He wrote: "I have such reliance on the good sense of the body of
Writing desk	the people that I am not afraid of
Close-up of desk from above	their letting things go wrong to any length in any cause." He
Close-up of quill pen	believed in us. Maybe that's why we feel that he is still with us
Zoom out, pan down to inkwell	somehow.
Close-up of books	Would he be on the side of black
Trucking backwards	people and poor people trying to gain their civil rights today?
	Beyond a doubt. Would he support
High angle, medium shot of bookcase, pan down	women trying to achieve the same rights as men? We can be sure of
	it. Liberty was his work.
Zoom in to plan in frame on wall	On the wall of his study hangs his plan for the University of
	Virginia, to be built down the hill
	from Monticello. "If a nation

VIDEO	AUDIO
Dissolve to exterior shot of university and pan of grounds	expects to be ignorant and free," he wrote, "it expects what never was and never will be." He founded the university as an act of liberty.
High angle of building	
Bust of Jefferson through window zoom in	Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence as a red-haired young man of thirty-three. Over the years, he changed his mind about many things, but not about liberty. As a white-haired old man of eighty-three, he cared about nothing else so much.
Dissolves to painting of Jefferson as an old man, then zooms out	
Dissolves to another painting of Jefferson over mantel, then zooms out to Kuralt	The fiftieth anniversary of the 4th of July was coming and was much on Jefferson's mind. The mayor of Washington sent him an invitation to attend. On June 24th, 1826, Jefferson sat down here and took his pen in hand to write that he was too old and weak to accept. There was nothing old and weak about the letter. It was a democratic outburst as clear as a
Stand-up	
Kuralt walks to writing desk Kuralt takes pen in hand	

VIDEO	AUDIO
Very slow zoom in to Kuralt	liberty bell. "The mass of mankind," he wrote, "has not been born with saddles on their backs nor the favored few booted and spurred to ride them legitimately, by the grace of God." It was a youthful letter, full of power. It might have been the first thing he ever wrote. As it turned out, it was the last.
Dissolves to American flag	He wanted to live until the 4th of July, and he did. Fifty years to the day after the Declaration of Independence, having said all he had to say to us, which was enough, Thomas Jefferson died on this bed, a free man.
Cut to shot of Jefferson's bedroom	
Dissolve to bust of John Adams at bedroom window	On that same day, a few hours later, away to the north in Massachusetts, John Adams, also old and weak, also satisfied to have lived until the 4th, also died. His last words were: "Thomas Jefferson still lives." You were right about
Zooms out to Kuralt standing by Jefferson's bed with Adams' bust in background	

VIDEO	AUDIO
Zooms back to wide shot	that, Mr. Adams. Charles Kuralt, CBS News, On the Road to '76, in Virginia.

Special permission to use this script granted by CBS News.

TELEVISION PLAYS

ACTIVITY:

Most people feel that the television play is the most creative form of television script writing. Since the students have worked on scripts for commercials, news, and documentaries by the time they study the television play, they should have enough experience in scripting techniques to write their own plays.

The good television play incorporates all of the aspects of any good short story, novel, or drama writing. The setting must be carefully planned out before writing the television script because the setting will be conveyed through both the audio and the video of the television play. The television play demands that the students give detailed attention to the development of the characters and the plot. Consideration must be given to how an epilog should be handled. For this reason teachers can use television plays to introduce or nurture all creative writing. Television plays make a good transition from not writing creatively to understanding plot and dialog's importance in creative writing. By writing television plays, the students can begin their creative writing with something they are very familiar. Teachers have worked at trying to help students write good short stories for years. With the gimmicks of television, students will feel a new stimulation to write and include the same basic ingredients called for in other writing.

Possibilities for writing television scripts in play format cover a wide range of student interests. A humorous play does not usually

show a great deal of character development, but it does afford the student a good writing exercise in handling dialog. The serious drama does provide experience in writing with both character and plot development considerations. Students like to write about a mystery or detective theme, and they have viewed many such dramatizations on television.

In the beginning of their plays, the students generally find it useful to use a slide to establish the opening scene. However, the student will have to have a good mental image of his slide before writing the script if the scene is to start off well. A new perspective is seen by the student when he must decide if he is to show his characters through a medium shot or a close up shot. The stage play does not force its author into such a decision; however, the television play writer can add medium camera shots and close up shots for added dimension for the presentation. In other words, the television script exercise is actually asking that the student write everything asked of him in other creative writing and much more. Also, the teacher wants to emphasize that the student must write such an appealing beginning to catch the viewers or else he might as well plan that his viewers have switched to another channel. A play audience usually will not walk out until the intermission.

Teachers can develop lessons about the parts of speech around television scripts, too. For example, adverbs can be used in the audio instructions just as with any stage play. The dialog should be accompanied with directions as to how the lines are to be said (e.g. sharply, calmly, soothingly). The student may want a character to over-use a verb to create an image of that character. An example would be "Do you

dig?" The teacher can ask the student to list all of the other verbs which could be substituted even though the character would still use "dig" in the television script. Television plays may incorporate some slang, but standards for good grammar and punctuation can still be pointed out. Certainly, elements such as sentences of various structures and lengths are a part of the television script as they are with any other dramatization.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

SURVEY:

William A. Belson has written a book called Television Violence and the Adolescent Boy. This book was published in 1978, making the material a little old. However, the following comments made by television critics seemed timeless and appropriate for consideration--especially if critical viewing skills are to be developed. A number of specialists in the area of television have had a wide variety of opinions on the effects of television violence on children. Those interviewed were heads of television production departments, script writers, television critics, and others employed in some position related to television. Their views provide teachers with possible writing topics in that the teacher can ask her students whether they agree or disagree and why. Also, if the teacher did not want to use the topics for individual writing assignments, a student survey could be created. Students could then write about the results of the survey of their classroom or school. The writing could make an interesting school or local newspaper article. The topics are set up as a survey:

SURVEY

TOPIC	AGREE	DISAGREE	UNSURE
Whatever is shown teaches something.			
Television violence has increased awareness of how to injure people.			
Children copy the techniques of violence shown on TV.			

TOPIC	AGREE	DISAGREE	UNSURE
Hanging scenes have led to instances of children hanging themselves.			
Television violence has contributed to the increase of crime.			
The news highlights the revolutionary aims of a very few people and is thus responsible for the current wide-spread student revolt.			
Realistic violence on television shows how bad violence is and thus deters people from it.			
Scenes of horror in television drama make children nervous and frightened, and may cause bedwetting and nightmares.			
Sensitivie children are most affected by television violence.			
Adult interpretations of violence can be an assault on the minds of children who watch [violence].			
Television violence, particularly news which shows deaths, killings, executions, leads to desensitisation, acceptance of violence, loss of shock.			
Television violence makes boys [and girls] think that there is really nothing to violence; you don't feel anything.			
Some cartoons encourage people to laugh at violence and sadism.			
Seeing sadism (e.g. detailed portrayal of holding a man's head under water to drown him) coarsens boys [and girls] and can damage their personalities.			
Television violence leads to anxiety and frustration which may lead to different types of violent behavior.			

TOPIC	AGREE	DISAGREE	UNSURE
News condenses the decision making process, making it seem simpler and quicker than it really is, thereby frustrating people who don't find decision making quick or simple. Such views thereafter resort to violence to secure their desired quicker decision.			
Films [on television], particularly war films, put across prejudiced and stereotyped pictures of foreign groups [and other Americans].			
People use media to reinforce prejudices and attitudes.			
The effects of the medium itself can be greater than the effects of its contents--people become drugged and can lose the ability to react to violence on the screen. Television in this sense is hypnotic.			

WRITING TOPIC IDEAS TO PROMOTE CRITICAL VIEWING

The following are a collection of assorted writing topics based on statements made about television. Various ways to assign the materials have been suggested. By the nature of the statements, the students are forced to make some sort of analysis of television before they can begin their writing.

1. Peggy Charren in an article, "Beyond 1984," has stated: "The world children watch on TV is peopled primarily by white American males, age 18 to 35. Women are more often witches than workers; blacks sing and play basketball; Asians are villains; and the elderly are victims." [28]

   (To the students) Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give examples taken from your own television viewing experience to support your decision. The different aspects of the statement (e.g. "the elderly are victims") can be broken down into separate paragraphs of an essay.

2. "It took five years of rulemaking at the Federal Communications Commission to reduce the advertising minutes on children's programs, and the National Association of Broadcasters' Code still permits more ads per hour to children than to adults on prime time." [29]

   (To the students) Since adults normally earn more money than children, why would broadcasters gear their advertising towards children? Do you feel that the Code should remain or be changed? Explain your decision in a well developed paragraph.

3. Congressman Marc Lincoln Marks has said: "The image of the passive viewer who becomes a mere 'knob jockey' instead of an active participant and the depiction of television as the 'plug-in drug' portray in a lucid manner the negative aspects of viewing." 30

   (To the students) Write a three paragraph essay that explains the differences between active and passive television viewing. Do you consider yourself a "knob jockey"? Do you consider TV as a "plug-in drug"? Do you feel that most of your television viewing is active or passive? If you feel that your viewing is basically the "plug-in drug" passive variety of viewing; and, you want to change to more active viewing, how would you plan to change?

4. Milton E. Ploghoft in an article called "What is Basic About Critical Receiver Skills?" has developed an idea of using TV viewing and writing as a pre-book report writing skill. He states: "In the middle grades and junior high school it is not uncommon to involve children in writing book reports. An excellent preparatory activity would have students view a television entertainment program for the purpose of identifying main characters, minor characters, and characters that were not needed to carry the plot forward."31

ERIC MATERIALS ON TELEVISION

Included here are some of the most recent ERIC publications about television and the ERIC accession number. The best publication (which could work well with this handbook) is a 73 page book by Michael Druce and Bob Walker. It is The Student Video Production Handbook: A Guide to Planning and Teaching Student Video Productions. This handbook goes into great detail about establishing a studio for video instruction. Its accession number is ED 268 993.

Other publications of ERIC which might be of interest to teachers are also listed. At the end of the listing is the address to use if ordering any of these materials.

"Consonance in Network Prime-Time Programming" ED 271 768

"Visual Excellence and Photographic Professionalism in Local News" ED 270 820

"The Effects of Involvement, Message Appeal, and Viewing Conditions on Memory and Evaluation of TV Commercials" ED 270 821

"Political Ads vs. News as Sources of Issue Information" ED 271 752

"The Relationship Between Childhood Television Viewing Habits and Adult Viewing Behaviors" ED 268 591

"Television Entertainment and Viewers' Conceptions of Science" ED 271 096

"Television News and Sexist Language: A Study of Television News Effects" ED 270 818

"Terrorism on the Evening News: An Analysis of Coverage of the TWA Hostage Crisis on NBC Nightly News" ED 270 807

"The Effects of Visual-Verbal Redundancy and Recaps on Television News Learning" EC 270 764

"The Impact of Courtroom Cameras on Media Coverage of Trials" ED 266 515

"An Integrative Cross-Cultural Examination of Children's Use of Television" ED 270 757

"The Effect of Sibling Viewing Style on Children's Interpretation of Television Content" ED 267 917

"The Effect of Six Production Variables on Recall of Television Commercials during Fast Forward 'Zapping'" ED 269 772

"The Effects of Pre-Debate Training on Viewers' Perceptions and Evaluations of Presidential Debates" ED 267 474

"Feeling and Learning about a Critical Event: The Shuttle Explodes" ED 270 810

"The Impact of the Cable Television Industry on Public Television" ED 268 958

"Television and Reading: A Research Synthesis" ED 267 389

"Television and Young Children: The Effects of Television on Dramatic Play" ED 267 929

"TV and Its Affect on the Family" ED 272 314

"Age Differences in Children's Perceptions of Message Intent: An Exploratory Study" ED 262 449

"Children's Attention to Television: The Influence of Story Schema Development on Allocation of Mental Effort and Memory" ED 263 639

"Children's Auditory and Visual Processing of Narrated and Non-narrated Television Programming" ED 262 439

"Children's Television Viewing as Affected by Contextual Variables in the Home" ED 260 484

"Character Portrayals and Social Values in TV Commercials" ED 264 827

"The Effects of Intraprogram Synopses on Children's Comprehension of Television Programming and Commercials" ED 265 975

"The Role of Emotion in Memory for Television Commercials" ED 263 628

"Children's Perceptions of Moral Themes in Television Drama" ED 263 635

"Critical Reading: Visual Skills" ED 260 371

"The Influence of Television on Children's Attention Abilites" ED 265 933

"Parent-Child Communication about Television: A View from the Parent's Perspective" ED 265 840

"Television as a Talking Picture Book: A Prop for Language Acquisition" ED 264 042

"TV Viewing Habits, Family Rules, and Reading Grades of Gifted and Nongifted Middle School Students" ED 264 050

These publications can be ordered from:

Document Reproduction Service
3900 Wheeler Avenue
Alexandria, Virginia 22304-5110

In addition to the publications which have been listed, there are a number of current magazine articles dealing with television viewing which teachers may want to check into. These articles are very recent and have been listed in the Current Index to Journals in Education. Information about ordering copies of these articles will appear at the end of the listing. The article most closely related to using TV to stimulate classroom writing would be:

"The next Episode: Soap Operas as a Bridge to Improved Verbal Skills" by Robert F. Moss. English Journal, vol. 76, no. 1, pp. 35-41, Jan., 1987. EJ 347 024
"Elaborates some strategies for incorporating soap opera into a composition course for remedial English students. Approach provides an instructional uniformity--everyone will be writing on the same subject matter; and plot, narrative, characterization, structure, etc. can be discussed and essay topics developed."

Other articles which teachers may want to check are also listed but described in less detail.

"Some Structural Characteristics of Music Television Videos" by DonaldL. Fry and Virginia H. Fry. Southern Speech Communication Journal, vol. 42, no. 2, pp. 151-64, Winter, 1987. EJ 343 562
"Indicates, by analyzing two types of montage structures, that music television is a hybrid form of television programming displaying visual characteristics of both television commercials and drama."

"Education of Television Audiences: Nature and Objectives" by Miguel Reyes Torres. Prospects: Quarterly Review of Education, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 391-96, 1986. EJ 344 553
"This article argues that the time has come for the development of a curriculum for the education of television audiences."

"Project Literacy: K G O-TV Fights Local Illiteracy" by Sylvia Ramirez. Television Broadcast, vol. 9, no. 11, pp. 50-55, Nov., 1986. EJ 347 075
"Describes the three one-hour programs developed by television station K G O to promote adult literacy in the San Francisco area."

"Anonymous Attribution in Network News" by Tim K. Wulfemeyer and Lori L. McFadden. Journalism Quarterly , vol. 63, no. 3, pp 468-73, Autumn, 1986. EJ 346 972
"Concludes that more than half of the stories on network newscasts contained anonymous source attribution."

"Viewing Television News" by Donna Rouner. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 70-73, March, 1987. EJ 346 817
"Briefly summarizes the research on television viewing behavior relevant to news watching."

"Television News Without Pictures?" by Doris A. Graber. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, vol. 4, no. 1, pp 74-78, March, 1987. EJ 346 818
"Describes 'gestalt' coding procedures that concentrate on the meanings conveyed by audio-visual messages rather than on coding individual pictorial elements shown in a news story."

"Local Television News" by Steve M. Barkin. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, vol. 4, no. 1, pp 79-82, March, 1987. EJ 346 819
"Discusses issues raised in a content analysis of local television news, including (1) media definitions of community, (2) community in the narrative, (3) the question of "boosterism".

"Perceived Career Barriers for Female Television News Anchors" by Anthony J. Ferri and Jo E. Keller. Journalism Quarterly, vol. 63, no. 3, pp 463-67, Autumn, 1986. EJ 346 971
"Concludes that some stereotypical barriers are not perceived as impediments to careers by female anchors."

"Locally Produced Programming on Independent Television Stations" by Gary A. Hale and Richard C. Vincent. Journalism Quarterly, vol. 63, no. 3, pp 562-67, 599, Autumn, 1986. EJ 346 986
"Examines the locally produced programming on independent television stations and concludes that such programming averages only about 3.6 hours a week and is declining."

To order copies of these articles, the teacher should write to:

UMI Article Clearinghouse
300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

The teacher should supply the EJ number, author, title of article, name of journal, volume, issue number and date. All of the articles listed here have been published recently, and copies of these articles would be $8.00 each.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES

Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum (K-5)
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
211 East 7th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

The Television Criti-Kit (Middle School)
W N E T/Thirteen
Critical Viewing Skills Project
356 West 56th Street
New York, New York 10019

Channel: Critical Reading/TV Viewing Skills
Educational Activities, Inc.
Freeport, New York 11520

The Television Reading Program
Capital Cities Communications, Inc.
4100 City Line Avenue
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19131

CBS Reading Program
51 West 52nd Street
New York, New York 10019

Movie Scriptreader Program
Films Incorporated
Moviestrip Division
1144 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, Illinois 60091

CAREER EDUCATION

A part of any career education is the mere exposure of various job possibilities to the students. I feel certain that many times when we give our students a writing assignment, they think of it as just that--a writing assignment. Assignments connected with television, however, are of a different order. Writing a commercial or developing a plot line for television will seem a step closer to the kind of writing students may be asked to do in a career setting.

. There are supplementary materials on television careers in general available to teachers. I have included a sampling of these extra materials and have divided these career information materials into approximate levels.

Children's Press has produced a set of books designed for kindergarten through the third grade level. In their "I Want To Be Books" series is one book on transportation and communication. The communication section is a basic introduction to newspaper, broadcasting, and telephone communications jobs.

"I Want To Be Books"
Children's Press
1224 West Van Buren Street
Chicago, Illinois 60607.

Beginning with fourth graders and going up at least through the sixth grade level is the Widening Occupational Roles Kit published by Science Research Associates. This kit introduces the student to the education which would be required to pursue a career in various facets of television. The address to contact this company is on the next page.

Widening Occupational Roles Kit
Science Research Associates
259 East Erie Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Doubleday and Company has prepared its Careers Series of books, including one section called "Communications." This book shows a sampling of careers in all fields of communications. The books of this series are designed to meet the career education needs of students in the seventh through the ninth grades.

Careers Series
"Communications"
Doubleday and Company
School and Library Division
Garden City, New York 11530.

For this same age group there is a taped series called "Careers" produced by the Gordon Flesch Company. One tape in particular is devoted to Mass Communications careers and includes a section on television.

Careers
"Mass Communications"
Tapes Unlimited
Gordon Flesch Company
225 Beltline Highway, N.
Madison, Wisconsin 53713.

Students in the tenth through twelth grades should enjoy a filmstrip titled "Careers in Television" produced by the Educational Dimensions Corporation. The filmstrip presents the variety in career possibilites in television.

Careers in Television
Educational Dimensions Corporation
Box 146
Great Neck, New York 11023.

A book which would be very helpful for the high school student who wants a detailed breakdown of job descriptions and salary expectations for a great variety of occupations in both television broadcasting and video telecommunications would be a book by Maxine K. and Robert M. Reed. This book is:

Career Opportunities in Television and Video
Facts on File Publications
460 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016.

In this book, for example, under television broadcasting production alone there are separate descriptions for production manager, executive producer, producer associate, director, assistant director, unit manager, floor manager, production assistant, lighting director, art director, graphic artist, cinematographer, and operations manager.

Published by the U. S. Department of Labor, The Occupational Outlook Handbook, available in most secondary school libraries, is valuable for specific information about television careers. Students can find information such as educational requirements, job market projections, detailed job descriptions and salary expectations. The Occupational Outlook Handbook is updated every two years. Based upon information from this source, the teacher can assign a reference paper project. The teacher should also include the Reed book for such a paper. Personal interviews with a person in the field should be encouraged by the teacher. Possible topics are "Television Play Writing for a Career," "News Collecting and Writing Careers," "Free Lance Writing Careers for Television," and "TV Variety Show Writing for a Career." For added interest, the teacher could assign a TV script be written

upon a career in television. This type of script would be the television documentary and a factual dramatization. Such a documentary could be valuable enough for the school to keep the tape for future students.

SUMMARY

A teacher should sample a variety of television programs and commercials. Although many programs may not appeal to the teacher and his or her viewing tastes, the teacher can feel certain that at least some of the students have seen some of everything presented on TV. If the teacher accepts the fact that television is an integral part of the student's life, the possibilities of developing curriculum based upon television can be expanded. A teacher can collect ideas through one's own viewing. The creative teacher will accept the challenge to correlate television viewing with good writing activities.

NOTES

[1]Albert C. Book, Norman D. Cary and Stanley I. Tannenbaun, The Radio and Television Commmercial. (Chicago, Illinois: NTC Business Books, 1984), p. 97.

[2]Marie Winn, The Plug-In Drug. (New York: Viking Press, 1985), P. 4.

[3]Debbie Wasserman Bilowit, "Critical Television Viewing: A Public Television Station Reaches Out" in Education for the Television Age. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981), p. 64.

[4]Bilowit, p. 64.

[5]Richard Adler, et al. The Effects of Television Advertising on Children. (Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath, 1980), p. 24.

[6]William A. Belson, Television Violence and the Adolescent Boy. (Westmead, England: Saxon House, 1978), p. 17.

[7]Michael Howe, Television and Children. (Hamden, Connecticut: Linnet Books, 1977), p. 33.

[8]Winn, pp. 3-4.

[9]Winn, pp. 88-89.

[10]Huntley Baldwin, Creating Effective TV Commercials. (Chicago: Crain Books, 1982), p. 127.

[11]Baldwin, p. 148.

[12]N. Craig Ashton, "The Way We See It: A Program Design for Instruction of Critical Television Skills" in Education for the Television Age. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981), p. 58.

[13]H. Ted Bush and Terry Landeck, The Making of a Television Commercial. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1980), pp. 5-9.

[14]Book, p. 19.

[15]Book, pp. 25-29.

[16]Michelle E. Coe, How To Write for Television. (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1980), pp. 20-21.

[17]Marya Mannes (quoted) Robert M. Liebert, et al, The Early Window: Effects of Television on Children and Youth. (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982), p. 10.

[18]Ashton, p. 60-61.

[19]K. Tim Wulfemeyer, Broadcast Newswriting: A Workbook. (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1983), p. 37.

[20]Ted White, Adrian J. Meppen, Steve Young, Broadcast News Writing, Reporting, and Production. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1984), p. 90.

[21]White, pp. 90-92.

[22]White, p. 240.

[23]Wulfemeyer, p. 35.

[24]Wulfemeyer, "Introduction".

[25]Harry Reasoner, Before the Color Fades. (New York: Alfred A. Knoft, 1981), p. 161.

[26]Av Westin, Newswatch: How TV Decides the News. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), p. 197.

[27]Reasoner, p. 162.

[28]Peggy Charren, "Beyond 1984" in Education for the Television Age. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981), p. 43.

[29]Charren, p. 47.

[30]Marc Lincoln Marks, "Children and Television" in Education for the Television Age. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981), p. 49.

[31]Milton E. Ploghoft, "What is Basic About Critical Receiver Skills?" in Education for the Television Age. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981), p. 129.

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